

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COURT OF APPEALS

In the Matter of TERRENCE WEST, JR., and
STEPHEN WOODS, JR., Minors.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

LAREE J. PATTON,

Respondent-Appellant,

and

TERRENCE WEST, SR., and STEPHEN
WOODS, SR.,

Respondents.

UNPUBLISHED
February 14, 2006

No. 264194
Berrien Circuit Court
Family Division
LC No. 03-000066-NA

Before: Borrello, P.J., and Sawyer and Fitzgerald, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Respondent-appellant appeals as of right from the order terminating her parental rights to the minor children pursuant to MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i), (g) and (j). We affirm.

We review the trial court's findings in termination proceedings for clear error. *In re Miller*, 433 Mich 331, 358; 445 NW2d 161 (1989). In this case, the trial court did not clearly err in finding that the grounds for termination were established by clear and convincing evidence.

Respondent-appellant has given birth to two medically fragile children and one with special needs. At the time the petitioner became involved with this family, respondent-appellant had recently given birth to Stephen, a child who was born with no anus. Stephen and Terrence were removed from respondent-appellant's home after respondent-appellant failed to attend Stephen's medical appointments. As a result of this medical neglect, Stephen was severely constipated with blockage of the bowels up to his chest. He was also developmentally delayed; a

condition directly related to the constipation and blockage. While Stephen and Terrence were in care, respondent-appellant gave birth to another child, DeShaun,¹ who was born with a very rare and severe brain deformity that required the placement of a shunt and resulted in mental retardation, impaired vision, and hydrocephalus.

For nearly two years, respondent-appellant was provided services to improve her parenting skills and assist her in appreciating the severity of her children's medical conditions and providing for their needs. In particular, respondent-appellant was provided with information regarding her children's various medical appointments and therapies and an opportunity to attend. While respondent-appellant did comply with the very basic elements of her treatment plan, she did not regularly attend her children's appointments and did not participate in any meaningful way in the ones she did attend. At the time of termination, respondent-appellant did not truly understand the children's medical conditions or the nature of their specialized needs. Consequently, we hold that the trial court did not clearly err when it terminated respondent-appellant's parental rights pursuant to MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i), (g) and (j).

Affirmed.

/s/ Stephen L. Borrello
/s/ David H. Sawyer
/s/ E. Thomas Fitzgerald

¹ The termination of respondent-appellant's parental rights to DeShaun is not at issue in this appeal.